

Message Text

SECRET

PAGE 01 CANBER 09216 230648Z
ACTION SS-15

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O R 230600Z DEC 76
FM AMEMBASSY CANBERRA
TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 9558
INFO AMEMBASSY LONDON
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AMEMBASSY PARIS
AMEMBASSY LUXEMBOURG
AMEMBASSY TOKYO
AMEMBASSY BRUSSELS
AMEMBASSY ROME
AMEMBASSY JIDDA
AMEMBASSY COPENHAGEN
AMEMBASSY OSLO
AMEMBASSY ABU DHABI
AMEMBASSY THE HAGUE
AMEMBASSY KUWAIT
AMEMBASSY TEHRAN
AMEMBASSY DUBLIN
AMEMBASSY STOCKHOLM
AMEMBASSY OTTAWA
AMEMBASSY WELLINGTON

S E C R E T CANBERRA 9216

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: PDEV, EGEN, RH
SUBJECT: U.K. APPROACH TO AUSTRALIA ON ZIMBABWE DEVELOPMENT FUND

REF: STATE 304674

1. BRITISH HIGH COMMISSIONER TEBBIT MET WITH FONMIN PEACOCK
IN MELBOURNE ON DECEMBER 22 TO DISCUSS THE DEVELOPMENT
FUND. WHEN PRESENTING THE JOINT LETTER AND DOCUMENT-
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ACTION ON THE PROPOSED FUND, TEBBIT ALSO DREW ON U.S.
TALKING POINTS CONTAINED IN REFTEL.

2. PEACOCK AGREED CONSULT WITH P.M. FRASER AND THE
AUSTRALIAN CABINET AS SOON AS POSSIBLE AND HOPED TO HAVE
A REPLY, AT LEAST IN PRINCIPLE, BY MID-JANUARY (THE NEXT

CABINET MEETING IS SCHEDULED FOR JANUARY 14). PEACOCK'S INITIAL VIEW WAS THAT: (A) THE AMOUNT SUGGESTED FOR AUSTRALIA WAS TOO HIGH IN RELATION TO AUSTRALIAN COMMITMENTS ELSEWHERE, AND (B) THE USE OF THE FUND TO GUARANTEE LAND SALES BY RHODESIAN WHITES WOULD PRESENT SPECIAL PROBLEMS FOR AUSTRALIA BECAUSE OF PAPUA NEW GUINEA WHERE THE AUSTRALIAN GOVERNMENT HAD RESISTED HEAVY PRESSURE TO PROVIDE MONEY FOR THE SAME PURPOSE WHEN LEAVING THAT COUNTRY.

3. IN REPLY, TEBBIT STRESSED THAT: (A) THE SUM SUGGESTED WAS NOT HIGH IN RELATION TO AUSTRALIA'S MEANS AND LONG-TERM INTERESTS; THE AMOUNT PROPOSED WAS A MAXIMUM TO BE SPREAD OVER A NUMBER OF YEARS, AND (B) THE PURPOSE OF THE FUND WAS TO FACILITATE A PEACEFUL SETTLEMENT AND HELP MAKE POSSIBLE AN INDEPENDENT VIABLE ZIMBABWE NATION. IT WAS NOT DESIGNED TO ASSIST THE WHITE SETTLERS.

4. OVERALL, PEACOCK GAVE TEBBIT THE IMPRESSION THAT, SUBJECT TO FRASER'S PERSONAL REACTION IN LIGHT OF AUSTRALIAN BUDGET PROBLEMS, PEACOCK WOULD BE PREPARED TO FIGHT IN THE CABINET FOR AN AUSTRALIAN CONTRIBUTION, ALTHOUGH NOT AS LARGE A CONTRIBUTION AS THAT REQUESTED. PEACOCK EXPRESSED SPECIAL INTEREST IN WHICH OTHER COUNTRIES, ESPECIALLY ARAB COUNTRIES, WERE BEING ASKED TO CONTRIBUTE AND THE AMOUNTS INVOLVED, WHICH TEBBIT PROVIDED.

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